

THE SILENT GEOGRAPHERS

Unveiling the Hidden Pioneers



Rasmiya Niyas,

Fareena Ruzaik

University of Colombo

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Rasmiya Niyas is an independent researcher, author, and academic with a deep passion for geography. She holds a BA (Hons) in Geography from the University of Colombo and is currently pursuing an MPhil at the University of Peradeniya. With extensive experience in academia, she has served as an Assistant Lecturer in the Department of Geography, University of Colombo. As a dedicated scholar, Rasmiya has published numerous research articles in esteemed journals, including Springer Nature and SCOPUS-indexed publications, and has presented her work at national and international conferences.

In addition to her academic pursuits, Rasmiya is an accomplished author on Amazon Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP), where she has published seven books, bringing geographical knowledge and insights to a global audience.



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Prof. Dr. Fareena Ruzaik is a distinguished academic and researcher in the field of Geography, specializing in Health Geography and Environmental Management. She currently serves as a Professor in Geography and Head of the Department of Geography at the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka. With an extensive academic career spanning nearly three decades, Prof. Fareena Ruzaik has contributed significantly to academia through her research in disaster risk reduction, environmental sustainability, and public health geography. She has received multiple research excellence awards from the University of Colombo and has been actively involved in national and international committees. Therefore, to her national and International Contribution, she is a published author of several books and numerous scholarly articles, furthering knowledge in Geography and Environmental Studies.

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Miss. Rasmiya Niyas

Prof. Fareena Ruzaik

Department of Geography

University of Colombo

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rasminafees@gmail.com

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“Geography is the eye of history”

Ibn Khaldun

AUTHOR'S NOTE

"The Silent Geographers" is born from a deep respect and appreciation for the great contributions of Arab scholars in the growth of geography. Over the years, I have carefully collected information from various sources including books, research Papers, review articles, journals, newspapers and websites to accomplish this task.

The Inspiration for this book comes from the desire to reveal the valuable contributions of Arab geographers that are mostly hidden and unappreciated in the larger narrative of geographical history.

I aim to honour these remarkable scholars and provide comprehensive resources that reflect their legacy. I hope that this book not only teaches and inspires, but also testifies to the heritage of the geographic history.

I express my sincere gratitude to to all the scholars and researchers whose work has informed this book, and to the readers, I hope that the analysis of the results of the Arab pioneers will be as enlightening and rewarding for you as it has been for me.

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INTRODUCTION

The word "Dark Ages" describes a period of Intellectual decline in Europe. In the Middle Ages there was economic, cultural and intellectual decline in European world. But at the same period economic, intellectual, and cultural development began to increase in the Arab world. While Europe was falling behind in scientific learning, Arabs were developing new geographical ideas and theories. So, in this period the great scientific and geographic research raised in Arabia. The Arab traveled over a large area in the world. Because of these voyages, the Arabs developed their knowledge of the geographical environment in many regions. Especially under the Caliph Al Mansor 11(A.D 753-775) geographical knowledge began to develop among the Arabs. Latter under the auspices of Caliph Harun- al- Rashid "Baitul-Hikma" (The House of Wisdom) was established. The era of creativity and translation were started as the result of the establishment of Baitul-Hikma. Intellectuals and experts from all over the world were invited to teach the Arabs. As a result, many books and research were translated into Arabic from Greek, Latin and Persian. Also, Arabs started to contribute to many fields of knowledge. Specially, Arabs contributed to the fields of

1.1

Al- Idrisi



1.3

mathematical geography, physical geography, regional geography, climatology, oceanography, geomorphology, linear measurements, limits of habitable world, and sprawl of continents and oceans (Negi, 2019). So, The Arab's contributions for the development of the field of geography are praiseworthy. Various geological discoveries, geographic theories, books, maps, and measurements have been provided by Arab scholars. The achievements of Arab scholars in oceanography, climatology and geomorphology are remarkable.

The Arabs not only created this mathematics that would become an indispensable tool of scientific analysis, but also laid the foundations for these experimental research methods which, combined with mathematical analysis, produced modern science (Rather & Kanth, 2018). As well as the geographical guides, books, and experiences of Arab Scholars were the roots of various discoveries and findings made during the Renaissance. Unfortunately, the contributions of Arab Scholars to the field of geography are largely obscured. So according to that, some of the great contributions of the Arab scholars to the development of geography have been discussed here.

1.2

Al-Idrisi, also known as Dreses in Latin, was indeed a prominent Muslim Arab geographer and cartographer. He was born in Ceuta, which was under the rule of the Almoravids, a Berber dynasty. He lived during the 12th century, and his work had a significant impact on the field of geography.

Al-Idrisi is best known for creating the Tabula Rogeriana, also known as the Book of Roger, which is considered one of the most advanced world maps of the medieval period. This map was commissioned by Roger II of Sicily, and it aimed to gather and present geographical knowledge from various sources.

During his travels, Al-Idrisi visited several prominent locations in Europe. He explored regions such as Portugal, the Pyrenees, the French Atlantic coast, Hungary, and Jorvik (York). These journeys allowed him to gather information about different lands, cultures, and people, which he incorporated into his works.

In his book Nuzhat al-Mushtaq (The Pleasure Excursion for Him Who Desires to Cross the Horizons), Al-Idrisi compiled the geographical knowledge acquired from Islamic merchants, explorers, and travelers.

1.4

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